



THE ROLE OF THE SCHOOL GOVERNOR

July 2016

This booklet is intended for those who may be interested in becoming, or are already, a school governors at Morda Church of England Primary School.

As you read these pages you will realise there is quite a lot involved and much to take on board. However, the work is very interesting and rewarding and is done in the knowledge that it is in the best interests of children in care, who will become the next generation.

If, after reading this advisory booklet, you are still interested in becoming a school governor, or simply require further information, then please contact the Headteacher at the school. There are induction and training courses organised by the Local Authority and by The National Governors' Association, and current members of the governing body are always willing to help.

Thank you.

As a governor, you will be expected to serve on one or more of the school's main committees. All governors sit on the Learning Committee as it is the core of the school and its activities. The others are the Finance & General Personnel Committee and the Safeguarding, Health & Safety Committee. These core committees meet at least once a term.

The full governing body meets each term to receive the reports of the committees and the Headteacher's report. Other topics such as the school budget plan, Special Educational Needs, pupil behaviour and policy Documents amongst many others, are also reviewed.

LINK GOVERNOR SCHEME

A governor is assigned to each of the Core Subject areas as a link governor who liaises with the Subject Leader, to help monitor progress in that subject. This necessitates learning walks, meetings and class visits to enable the link governor to report to the governing body.

THE ROLE OF THE GOVERNOR

The role of governor is largely a thinking and questioning role, not a doing role.

A governor does NOT:

- write school policies
- undertake audits of any sort - whether financial or health & safety - even if the governor has the relevant professional experience
- spend much time with the pupils of the school - if you want to work directly with children, there are many other voluntary valuable roles within the school
- fundraise - this is the role of the PTA . The governing body should consider income streams and the potential for income generation, but not carry out fundraising tasks.

In order to perform this role well, a governor is expected to:

- get to know the school, including visiting the school occasionally during school hours on pre-arranged visits, and gaining a good understanding of the school's strengths and opportunities for improvement.
- attend induction training and regular relevant training and development events
- attend meetings (full governing body meetings and committee meetings) having read all the papers before the meeting, and be an active participant in those meetings
- act in the best interest of all the pupils of the school
- behave in a professional manner, as set down in the governing body's code of conduct, including treating all school and governing body business in strict confidence.

WHAT DOES A GOVERNOR DO?

Aim

To contribute to the work of the governing body in ensuring high standards of achievement for all children in the school by:

- Setting the school's vision, ethos and strategic direction
- Holding the Headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils
- Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent, to the benefit of all pupils

Activities

As part of the governing body team, a governor is expected to:

1. Contribute to the strategic discussions at governing body meetings which determine:
 - the vision and ethos of the school
 - clear and ambitious strategic priorities and targets for the school
 - that all children, including those with special educational needs, have access to a broad and balanced

- the school's budget, including the expenditure of the pupil premium allocation
 - the school's staffing structure
 - the principles to be used by school leaders to set school policies.
2. Hold the Senior Leadership Team to account by monitoring the school's performance. this includes:
- agreeing the outcomes from the self-evaluation prepared by the school and ensuring they are used to inform the priorities in the school development plan
 - considering all relevant data and feedback
 - asking challenging questions of school leaders
 - ensuring required audits are completed and the results implemented by senior leaders
 - ensuring senior leaders have developed the required policies and procedures and the school is operating effectively according to those policies

- acting as a link governor on a specific issue, including subject areas and carrying out visits to the school as agreed by the governing body and Head teacher. Link governors should make relevant enquiries to key staff and report to governing body on progress
- listening to and reporting to the school's stakeholders: pupils, parents, staff, and the wider community, including local employers.

3. Ensure the school staff have the resources, environment and support they require to do their jobs well.

4. When required, serve on panels of governors to:

- appoint the Headteacher and other senior leaders
- appraise the Headteacher
- set the Headteacher's pay and agree the pay recommendations for other staff
- hear latter stages of grievances and disciplinary matters
- hear appeals about pupil exclusions.

COMMITMENT & COSTS

Time commitment: Under usual circumstances, you should expect to spend between 10 and 20 days a year on your governing responsibilities; the top end of this commitment, which equates to about half a day per week in term time, is most relevant to the Chair and others with key roles, such as chairs of committees.

Initially, we would expect your commitment to be nearer 10 days a year. However, there may be periods when the time commitment may increase, for example when recruiting a Headteacher. Some longstanding governors may tell you that they spend far more time than this on school business however, it is fairly common for governors to undertake additional volunteering roles over and above governance.

Under Section 50 of the Employment Rights Act 1996, if you are employed, then you are entitled to 'reasonable time off' to undertake public duties; this includes school governance. 'Reasonable time off' is not defined in law, and you will need to negotiate with your employer how much time you will be allowed.

Expenses: Governors may receive out of pocket expenses incurred as a result of fulfilling their role as governor, and NGA recommends that a governing body should have such an expenses policy. Payments can cover incidental expenses, such as travel and childcare, but not loss of earnings.

COMPOSITION OF THE GOVERNING BODY

Governors are elected or co-opted to represent the following bodies and posts:

Foundation Governors (2) Morda Primary School is a Church of England Voluntary Controlled School and is entitled to two Foundation Governors. They have no limit on the time they can serve as governors. One of them is the Vicar of St. Oswald's Parish Church and one of them is elected by the Lichfield Diocesan Board of Education

Parent Governors (at least 2) are elected by parents of the school

Local Authority Governor (1) is appointed by Shropshire County Council

Co-opted Governors are appointed from the local community to ensure the governing body as a whole has the necessary skills to provide effective governance for Morda Primary School.

Headteacher

Staff Governor (1)

With the exception of the Headteacher and the Foundation Governors, governors serve a four-year term of office.

CONTACT DETAILS

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